

# With God and His Word in the POW Camps of Korea

BY CHAPLAIN HAROLD L. VOELKEL



*Candidates for baptism are examined*



*Wreaths of paper flowers made by prisoners for Worldwide Communion Service*



*Native leadership is developed among the prisoners*

WE CELEBRATED Worldwide Communion Service in the camps a few weeks ago, and it was such an inspiring time I feel you'll be interested in some of the pictures. I trust you don't feel that we are ceasing to be grateful to the Bible Society for the Scriptures you are so generously furnishing us,

*A former Buddhist priest, now a graduate of a Bible correspondence course, released and entering seminary*



even though we do not write as frequently as your bounty would warrant.

Despite constant changes and almost continual interruptions the Bible institutes and the study of the Bible correspondence courses go right on. Five men in one compound memorized the entire Book of Revelation. The ultimate victory of righteousness over evil taught in that book is of immense comfort and strength to the men there who have become victims of the titanic struggle between good and evil here in the Orient. At a recent Sunday service we had the men recite different chapters. When we came to the last man, I asked him what chapter he wished to recite. He replied, "Any one." That stumped me; and not wishing to make a

*Five men who could repeat the whole of the Book of Revelation*



decision, I turned to the congregation and asked the POW's which chapter their brother should recite. "The second," someone called out; and the young fellow started right off, "Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write . . ." and continued beautifully through to the end, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches."—Praise God!

*The Communion is served*







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PLEASE NOTE NEW ADDRESS—

Chaplain Harold Voelkel

2 M.P. Co., A.P.O. 59,

2 P.M. San Francisco, Calif.

January 26, 1953

Dear Everybody,

I've just returned from Taikoo where I bid the Lyons good-by. They are leaving on furlough, and the means of travel of their return to the United States, indicates I believe another milestone in missionary progress. They are traveling via Hong Kong, Bangkok, India, Europe, etc, and that isn't so novel in itself for many have done so, but they are flying all the way from Pusan to New York. Certainly that is something new. Rates on the airlines are dropping continually, and the last I heard was that the C.A.T. (Civilian Air Transport) Line was offering travel across the Pacific cheaper than by boat. I've forgotten whether we have announced our plan or not, but I am planning to resign from this Army appointment in June and go to America on furlough with Gertrude, Teddy and Harold. We hope Sally and Jack can join us next year, by which we mean that we hope we can locate a house in Wheaton, Ill. where Jack is in college, and also have Sally with us. If any of you have a three bed-room house in Wheaton we'll be grateful for it.

During the Christmas holidays the Kinslers had an experience that many of us have passed through, namely being robbed. Fran lost a camera, a typewriter, and two radios. The list of those who have been picked off is growing. The big news for me is that the camp here at Yung Chun is being considerably reduced. Most of the POWs are being transferred to other camps,-- Pusan, Masan, Kwang Ju, and Non San, and the probability is that I'll join the group going to Non San. Hence the new address given above. I can't say that it is easy to move, for we have just succeeded in making ourselves comfortable here, but then Army life is pretty much one move after the other. The one sure thing in the service is change; Its been quite cold this winter; a week ago we had the biggest snow in 50 years the oldtimers report, over two feet, an avalanche for this part of the country.

But there is change everywhere. On New Year's Day I took Jim Swallen's son, our nephew, up to Andong for a visit. You'll remember that the single-ladies and the Crothers' houses were shelled by the Reds in the summer of 1950 and destroyed. We grew accustomed to the sight of this tragic destruction, but on my last visit even the wreckage was being removed. The Mission granted permission to a local congregation to use the bricks and almost all of the remains of the single-ladies' house were gone, and much of the Crothers'. Yes, it gave me an emotional experience to see even the signs of the existence of these houses being removed. Mention of Andong leads me to speak of the visit of a girl who used to work in our home there. She was just a teen-ager when we first arrived, a bright girl, and she helped in our home in the care of our babies. In turn she was married and now after 18 years she appeared in my room, arriving while I was out. My roommate, the Catholic priest entertained her and her two months old baby, number six. I didn't recognize her when I first saw her, and no wonder after 18 years and six children. Dinner time came and knowing she had nowhere to go, I brought a plate from the mess hall for her, a plate I would have been happy to put before any American guest,-- baked ham, browned potatoes, peas, bread, jam, and a canteen of coffee. I left the room so that she would have greater liberty in enjoying her food, but when I returned to my surprise most of her dinner still remained on her plate. After inquiries, she replied that she was stopping off at her parents' home on the way to her own home, and would like to take this good food to her father, for she knew he had never tasted anything like it. Devotion, isn't it? So, the ham, potatoes, and peas were wrapped up carefully and taken along. I drove her to the railroad station and the train for Andong scheduled to leave at 7:00, left I think about 9:00. The run takes three hours, so you can imagine the discomfort of "enduring" all those hours to reach Andong and then walk to their village of Angkie outside the town where her parents live.



H. Voelkel, Jan. 26, 1953

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Quite a group of new missionaries of the various Missions from the Korean Language School in Tokyo are now visiting Korea for three weeks to get a look at things. Dorothy Clawson, a nurse formerly in China, has arrived in Taikun, and Stan Wilson is in Andong where he has been assigned. I understand, however, that with Ned Adams gone on a trip to the Board in New York for conferences, and the annual field-directors meeting, Stan has been asked to give Otto DeCamp a lift in Pusan part of the time he is over here. We hear that 700 packages of relief goods have arrived in Pusan and must be sorted, distributed, and acknowledged, a labor of love.

Sometime ago I promised you some remarks on Catholic priests, but I'm still not ready to get into the details. However, in a recent magazine article I read in their WORLD MISSION which my roommate had lying around, I'll quote some lines that will be interesting to all Koresites, particularly, I'm sure. The author of the article is Ernest B. Clemats, S.J. and it is entitled, KOREA, A LESSON IN CHRISTIAN VIGOR. The magazine is edited by Bishop Fulton J. Sheen, radio and television speaker. It is the autumn 1952 number.

"The difficulties (sic) facing the Church (Roman) at present seem to be the same as those listed in the CATHOLIC CHURCH IN KOREA, published in 1924 by the Paris Foreign Mission Society at the Nazareth Printing Press, Hong Kong. This publication, which has been the source of much of the material of this article, lists three major difficulties: 1) idol superstition and ancestor worship, 2) materialism and communism, 3) Protestantism.

"With the signing of the treaty between the United States and Korea on May 5, 1882, followed by Korean treaties with England, Germany, and France, and other powers, the door to the Hermit Kingdom was opened to Protestant missionaries. Methodists and Presbyterians, followed by Congregationalists, Seventh-Day Adventists, Salvation Army, Anglicans, and others in lesser numbers entered the peninsula. Their number grew so that in 1923 there were 542 Protestant compared with 60 Catholic missionaries. With almost unlimited funds, the Protestants were able to employ 611 native clergymen and 1,449 catechists, while the Catholic Church had only 42 native priests and about 30 paid catechists. Schools, dispensaries, hospitals, Seminaries, printing presses, newspapers, periodicals, mushroomed into existence. By 1950 the total of all Protestant denominations had risen to between 500,000 and 600,000. The Catholic population for the same year was about 260,000."

There you have it, dear friends.

With best wishes from your fellow "DIFFICULTY",

Harold Voelkel.

What a wonderful day God has given me! I am so grateful to Him tonight, just praising him with all my heart. His grace humbles me. I have so much evidence again that this work is God's, and that He stands guard over it, guides it, and prospers it, and that what is most needful for us is to be careful to follow Him in obedience.

Just before noon today Rak Chi Suh Moksa (Pastor), one of my original workers from Pusan (before Kojedo) who is the chaplain there, turned up and gave me a report that humbled me before God in gratitude. The Commanding Officer there has gone overboard in his helpfulness, (and he's a tough individual, too) but he granted them every possible privilege at Christmas time and is most generous in his attitude toward Pak and the Christians. More than 30 POWs have graduated from the Old Testament Bible Correspondence Course, and 40 from the New Testament Course. I was happy to have fountain pens we bought in Tokyo to give each of these graduates.

Cordially,

Harold.

Chaplain Harold Voelkel  
6 M.P. Service Co., Provisional  
A.P.O. 59, S. P.M., San Francisco

February 3, 1953

Dear Everybody,

Down in Pusan again for what is turning out to be a very eventful visit, but before getting into local affairs let me give you some details of the trip. I came to Taiku on Friday for my regular weekly meeting at the POW Camp there and seemed to strike it right, for at the Kinslers I met Sam Walgemuth and Dick Hillis, Youth for Christ men, the former is the head of their work in Japan, and Dick formerly in China is now their leader in Formosa. These brethren had come to look things over with a view to establishing a work in Korea. Paul Myung, pastor of Taiku's West Church, who attended an International Y F C Convention in Europe some years ago, had already led the Taiku Presbytery in making an overture to General Assembly to formerly invite Y F C to undertake work in Korea at its next Annual Meeting in April. These guests slept in a room in the Alpha House, the former single-ladies' home, returned to us by the Army. The Taiku General had commanded that an additional house be made available for missionaries which will give us three houses and add greatly to our comfort..\*\*\*\*\*

The asterics indicate a telephone call with most significant news,...Petrie Mitchell treasurer of the Southern Presbyterian Mission, made application for his wife and two year old son to come to Korea, and that application, we were just told, has been approved. Praise the Lord! Another most significant development, especially since we have so many new missionaries with small children in Japan who will now be cleared probably, to come over. All we need now is more houses. Things are moving right along, are they not? Well, the discussion in Taiku turned to relief organizations, and since I had not been around to see them, a trip was arranged for the next day with Dorothy Kinsler to show the two guests and me around. What suffering, on the one hand, and what faith and devotion, on the other! Only pictures will enable you to get the full force of the poverty and what it means to have these orphanages, widows' homes, blind schools, and Bible Clubs. All these places are in one area with a church right in the center. The U.N.Civil Assistance Corps has provided wooden houses, just four walls and a roof (wooden slats for the roof); the people must furnish straw mats or anything else they can scrounge to cover the roof for protection against rain and snow. The people must furnish the buildings, too, of course. Two classes of a Bible Club were in session in the church, and the alert attention paid by the kids, their keenness in answering questions, and their fine work in the midst of such meagre equipment is a thrill. In one class three little fellows were standing on a bench writing on a small blackboard that would only be large enough for one youngster in the States. There are now 300-400 Bible Clubs with a total enrollment of 30,000 children, having their daily worship and Bible study, and they lead the meetings themselves, - preside and participate. Its is a wonderful training in leadership, so different from the pedagogy in Japanese schools and the Japanese system that is still followed in many schools here, that of rote learning. Here it is education by participation. Helen Traubel, the opera star, visited a Club during her visit and heard the kids sing lustily ONWARD CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS. All the army chaplains who attend our POW meetings remark on the singing.

Upon my arrival in Pusan the big news was the fire that destroyed an area two city blocks long and one wide, right in the center of town. It was a place called the International Market, but more realistically might be termed the Black Market. Any Army item of food, clothing, or portable equipment, of almost any kind, could be purchased there quite openly. As soon as word reached the house of the fire, Otto DeCamp, Pete Mitchell, Tom Harnish, and Stan Wilson (a new arrival), rushed out and began carrying stuff from houses to places of safety and passing water buckets. They started out at 8:00 p.m. and returned at 1:00 in the morning. The description of them by the cook upon their return was graphic, - soot from head to foot, dirty and sweaty, despite the cold. Pete Mitchell ruined a suit by having dye spilled on it. The next day when I got around to taking pictures, women were still passing the scene crying as they realized the completeness of their loss. But not all were crying, for the whole wide space was already being cleared up, temporary shacks were appearing, new houses to replace the ruins. The Mission organized a relief committee, distributed clothing, food, and 50 million won (\$2,500.00) Fran Kinsler was sending the truck down from Taiku loaded with clothing.



H. Voelkel - Feb.3,1953

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On Sunday morning Stan Wilson and I left for Masan POW Camp, at 4:45 a.m. It was still dark, of course, but with a full moon. As we turned the corner from the house high on the hill among the refugee shacks, light beamed from the newly erected PyengYang church (refugees from the northern capital city) indicating that a congregation was already there for daybreak prayers. The two and a half hour ride was rough and cold, but enjoyable withal, and we reached the mess hall in plenty of time for breakfast, -eggs and bacon. Generous Uncle Sam! Thanks to you tax-payers! Out to the POW compound by 8:30 in the bitter cold, for a meeting in a wooden building without a stove, with cracks between the slats large enough for light and cold to enter. Wooden platforms, -the flooring, covered only half the building, so that half our congregation sat on the ground. There were 270 crowded into this building. It was physically cold, but a warm fellowship spiritually, for it was a graduation ceremony of the Bible Correspondence Course. A similar service was held in the afternoon in the second enclosure with nearly 600 present, although there were no windows. But it was an inspiration. Stan Wilson gave a greeting in both of the meetings, and in the second service the Commanding Officer awarded the prizes, -Bibles, and Hymnals, and fountain pens, (42 graduates in O.T., and 49 in N.T. course)

Speaking of Masan, the Australian Mission is expecting the arrival of a new couple in March and plan to open (that is, reopen) their Masan station which has been closed for years. A new Salvation Army couple, the Jiddowsons, have arrived and are staying with the Australians. The Southern Baptists are spreading out, a new couple and two nurses are expected soon. The Southern Presbyterians are having reinforcements, Mrs. Boyer has joined her hubby in Soon Chun. Miss Hopper, Miss Green, and Miss Miller are here. R.K. Robinson who was out for a brief time prior to the Red attack is returning. Paul Crane is back in Chun Ju. Three new missionaries from the Tokyo Korean Language School are over here looking around the stations, - Keith Crim, Tom Brown, and Ernest Pettis. The presence of new, young life is definitely manifest. The other evening things got so noisy here and so boisterous, I realized that some years had passed since anything as lively had taken place. We certainly had some good laughs.

Many of you will have seen the write-up in the current issue of THE, Feb.2, of the murder of Pang Wha Il, by American soldiers. That's mighty meaningful to me, for I worked with Pang in the National Christian Council Office in Seoul. There were three of us there, the other being Dr. Namkung, who was taken off by the Communists and killed. Two out of three victims of violence.

I've been busy these days saying "good-by" to the POW fellows who are being moved to other Camps. How beautifully it all fits in with my resignation in June, for all will be wonderfully cared for.

Cordially yours,

Harold Voelkel.

Chaplain Harold Voelkel  
6 M.P. Service Co., Provisional  
A.P.O. 59, 3 P.M. San Francisco, Calif.  
February 15, 1953

Dear Everybody,

Another precious Lord's Day. I have been officially transferred from Yung Chun to the Camp here at Non San. The POW Camp is about six miles from town and is in North Chulla province, although the town is just over the border in Chung Chun province. Thus far Bruce Cumming has divided his time between the Kwang Ju POW Camp and this one. The ride required about six hours on the train. This Camp at Non San is now the largest Camp, with fine congregations, Christian fellows I had known of course on Kojedo. There are three enclosures and on Friday when I made my first visit to the enclosure where the pastor POW is, the Christians gathered for a service right then and there. In arranging today's schedule it was decided that I should hold the services in the two remaining enclosures. It has been bitter cold today, and the first service was held in a tin building with a capacity of 600 into which 750 were crowded, and a number standing around the sides of the building. Paper wreaths, a banner of "welcome", and special numbers by the two choirs assured me of the warmth of my reception.

This particular enclosure has experienced a real stirring recently, and at least 300 new believers have been attending. What a joy it was to be back with my old friends whom I hadn't seen for several months! They presented me with a finger ring, of which I'm gathering quite a collection. We met for an hour and a half and then I hurried over to the chapel for a service for the G.I.s. I'm sorry I can't say much in praise of it, for the attendance was miserable, and I hope and pray I shall be used to awaken a concern spiritually in the hearts of many officers and men here.

This afternoon I was back in the remaining enclosure with a packed house; more wreaths, speeches, and two rings this time, one for both Gertrude and me. The POWs remember that Gertrude has been my purchasing agent securing the trumpets, organs, clarinets, accordians, note-books, pencils, etc. for them, and therefore included her in their gift of jewelry. Another happy and holy time. After adjournment a jeep came for me to take me to nearby churches, congregations I wanted to get acquainted with at once. Five large relief parcels had come, good warm clothing, and I figured I would meet more Christians on Sunday afternoon than at any other time. I was glad to make the visits for both groups are quite new and can stand all the help and encouragement we have to give. As I say, it was bitter cold and after two hours in an open jeep I was glad to get back to warmth. Fried chicken and ice-cream were on the menu tonight, thanks to all you generous taxpayers. I ate heartily!

On the way over from Yung Chun I stopped off at Tae Jun for a visit, my first since that eventful night, June 26, 1950, when as a fleeing Mission, the 79 of us who had been at Tae Chun Beach, sought shelter in the officers' mess of an American army installation. Well, that mess is still there. I ate there this time and slept across the hall from the large room where the men and boys expected to sleep that June night but from where we were roused out and started with the others on the trip to Pusan. Much has happened since that eventful night, has it not! At noon I was at the Methodist house in Tae Jun for lunch, the guest of Messers Brannon, his son-in-law Carl Judy, and a new agricultural man, Dean Shoengirt. Mr. Brannon said he considered the response to the Gospel greater now than at any time during his more than 40 years in the country. I called on the single-ladies, Miss Laird and Miss Ratlipp, whose house adjoins that of the men.

Yesterday was Korean New Year and the country-side is colorful with new clothing. Everyone seems to have been able to get a new outfit somewhere. Gaiety persists in the presence of great poverty and much misery.

Cordially yours,

Harold Voelkel.





Chaplain Harold Voelkel

Unit 6, P W Service

A.P.O. 59, 5 P.M. San Francisco, Calif

March 3, 1953

Dear Everybody,

This is being written in Pusan, my first visit in a month, and naturally in that time much can happen. The trip from Non San, 'way out in the sticks where I am now located, to Te Jun (formerly Taiden), on the mainland of the railroad, is in itself an adventure, for the rail service is pretty primitive.

Yesterday morning when I boarded the G.I. car, there sat Margaret Pritchard of the Southern Presbyterian Mission, who was en route to Japan for a little vacation. For over a year now, in fact a year and a half, she has kept close to her work as head of the nursing school in Chun Ju, and since she has just capped 15 nurses she has a month before the new class gets started, and so decided to get in a little rest. She'll fly, of course. She now has 40 nurses in the hospital, which indicates something of the extent of the work they are doing. There are two orphanages of 150 and 350 children in Chun Ju under Mission auspices, and the hospital has the responsibility of caring for the sick of these two institutions, besides their regular patients. Margaret mentioned the large number of abandoned babies that must be cared for. Children are left at the door of the hospital, on benches in the corridors, and the other day some boys found a babe on the railroad track, and as they were orphanage boys they brought it to the hospital.

On the Seoul-Pusan train to which we changed at Te Jun, was Sue Adams coming down to Pusan to meet Ned, returning from America, and two new Evangelical Alliance men (TEAM), Thomas Watson and William Garfield, who are still exploring but have decided to locate in Seoul. I haven't been able to find out what particular activity Watson intends to engage in (he did radio work in Japan), but Garfield will specialize in literature. Both intend to work in the language instead of through interpreters.

What a joy it was to find that dear old Chang Si the cook, formerly the Ross' cook in Syen Chun, had prepared mandoo-kuk (dumpling soup) my favorite, with rice and kimchi. How I ate! Army food is tremendous these days with steaks, baked ham, and fried chicken regularly, but as delicious as that is, it is good to get back to rice and kimchi occasionally. This morning bright and early Pete Mitchell, Southern Presbyterian treasurer, turned up with his two year old son John. And what most significant history little Johnie is making! For he is the first missionary child to be admitted to come over since the beginning of this "police action", and now that he has been permitted to come the other way, young couples of the different Missions who have been studying in Japan, are hoping to be able to get over with their children, too. More history, - the Mitchells in travelling from Pusan to Kwang Ju will not take the miserable train trip of 24 hours, but will fly, a mere hour's trip. How this will interest the retired, early members of the Missions!

A few more S.P. news items; Joe Hopper Senior is teaching in a colored college and expects to return to Korea with Mrs. Hopper next Fall. Florence Root is returning after a six months furlough. In the Chun Ju hospital the S.P.s have a Norwegian nurse, Miss Astrid Kraakanes, who was a member of the Norwegian hospital staff sent to Korea under U.N. (formerly a China missionary), who instead of returning to Norway after her term of service, offered herself to the Missions and was snapped up by the Southern Presbyterians.

On my way downtown this morning, the first thing to attract my attention was the crowds lined up in front of the bank. Another financial crisis is upon us. You remember that a number of months ago the government cracked down on all traders who were exchanging money at any other than the ridiculously low rate of 6,000 to 1. All the missions with their far-flung organizations and obligations to schools, hospitals, relief agencies, etc., were without funds. Well, we are in that fix again. The government has now required everybody to turn in his cash, and is releasing the new currency at greatly restricted amounts. Everything is tied up. Crowds were clamoring at the doors of the banks, with police trying to preserve order. Here at the house for a few days they were limited to canned salmon and other staples they had on hand, until some new cash was issued.

The dinner was a big celebration with the return of Ned Adams from the States, and Otto DeCamp from Japan. A new Youth for Christ worker, Douglas Cozart, who will live with the Kinslers in Taikou, came on the plane with them. It was a full house, a crowded table, and a happy fellowship. Next morning bright and early I got up to accompany Stan Wilson to a breakfast prayer meeting held weekly at the different houses by the younger missionaries. They meet at 7:00 for breakfast, spend time in a Bible study, and then go to prayer. I'll see if I can remember those present: Methodists Burkholder, Spitzkeit, and Don Payne; Oriental Missionary Society Elmer Kilbourne and Ned Haynes; a Seventh Day Adventist (?); Y M C A Bill ....; T E A M Tom Watson; Youth for Christ Cozart; Presbyterians Wilson and Voelkel. It delighted me to learn of this fellowship. They are also concerned with the work done among G.I.s and recently in conjunction with army chaplains, have arranged for a Saturday night popular Gospel meeting to be held in the Service Club, where they are confident a good crowd can be gathered and evangelized.

That afternoon was the official welcome of the Texas "Friend-Ship", a vessel bringing 300 tons of grain, clothing, and supplies from the churches of Texas to needy people in Korea, under the auspices of Church World Service. Chairs were arranged alongside the vessel on the pier, and Korean government and diplomatic dignitaries, missionaries and Korean church leaders gathered for the celebration. Henry Appenzeller of C W S presided in front of the mike, the Salvation Army Colonel Tang led in prayer, a representative from the Embassy spoke, and good old Ham Te Yung Moksa, vice-president of Korea, officially received the gifts. What a man, hale and hearty, as spry as ever, really pink-cheeked, and quite equal to the occasion. My mind went back to Annual Meetings of our Mission 12 or 15 years ago, when a solution was sought for this aged pastor, unable to work any more and without resources. Now he is V.P. (very important), he arrived in his own car, was faultlessly dressed, and thoroughly enjoyed the occasion. A group of children put on a harvest dance, with masks and clover attire. It was really tops, the first thing of its kind I'd ever seen.

On my way back to Non San, when we changed trains at Te Jun, a group of Americans got on board with a number of English speaking Korean young fellows, really superior. The Americans were an educational team, two women and five men, enroute to Chun Ju. They had been holding classes in educational research for High School principals in Pusan, who had been invited from all over the country. Now the team was visiting different areas to see what changed, if any, their "work-shops" had made in school set-ups. Now get this: the team had been sent out by our American State Dept. which had recruited them from the UNITARIAN SERVICE COMMISSION. Dear me, I had a sinking feeling. I learned that the women had been invited to stay at the missionary home in Chun Ju, and I felt comforted, for I knew if the Lintons spent some time with these Unitarians, they would at least learn of the definitely Trinitarian convictions of the Korean Church.

Cordially yours,

Harold Voelkel.

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Postscript by Gertnude Voelkel -

I want to let you know how very much we appreciate the letters from many of you kind friends. It lets us know these news letters are reaching you. They are now being mimeographed and mailed out by the Word of Life Press, here in Tokyo, Japan. But please do not let the Japanese address on the corner of the envelope confuse you for my correct address still is - Washington Hts. Dep. Mail, A.P.O. 500, S P.M., San Francisco, Calif. and 6¢ for airmail.



PLEASE NOTE NEW ADDRESS -

Chaplain Harold Voelkel  
& Presbyterian Foreign Board  
156 5th Ave. New York 10, N.Y.  
May 26, 1953

Dear Everybody,

This is it. This is the last Dear Everybody I plan to write. I have submitted my resignation to the Army to take effect June 15th, and we hope to get a sailing soon after. The Army is very generous in granting us transportation from Japan to the States, with the meagre charge of \$60.00 for each member of the family. We hope to leave soon after the 15th of June. I expect to fly from Taiku to Tokyo on June 2nd to help Gertrude pack. Thus shall end this series of letters, and let me for my part say that its been a lot of fun. Like many other things I didn't know what I was getting in to when I started, had no idea how the mailing list would grow, and didn't realize the material would lead to publication. I have just heard from Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, that they have decided to publish a booklet sketches of some of the experiences I wrote up in these letters, with the probable title, THE GOSPEL IN A RED P.O.W. CAMP. Billy Graham has written an introduction, and I hope the narrative will be helpful. It is scheduled to appear the middle of June.

With my resignation in mind I have visited all the POW Camps on the mainland located in six places, - Ascom City, 15 miles from Seoul on the Inchon Road, Yung Chun 24 mi. east of Taiku, Taiku, Pusan, Masan, and Kwang Ju. I hadn't been to some of these places for a while, and it was that much more fun to see how true and steadfast the men are in their faith, and how they are "redeeming" the time in worthy pursuits. Things are on the move: Bible Institutes are being maintained despite increasing work-details, and the graduates of the Bible Correspondence Course are more than ever. In Kwang Ju where we have one of the largest Christian groups and one of the ablest, I found they were issuing two monthly church magazines, neatly mimeographed, with articles entitled, THE GOOD SAMARITAN, A CHRISTIAN YOUNG MAN'S LIFE LIVED IN THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD, etc, etc. The name of one magazine is THE HOLY FLAME, and the second is THE MORNING STAR. Excellant training for future church literary work, isn't it?

Yesterday a letter came from one of the fellows released from Yung Chun last summer. He was one who had become a Christian in the camp, and because there was no church in his home community to which he returned, he got busy and by personal testimony has led 20 some adults and a number of children to Christ, and now they are building a church. He plans a building that would cost the equivalent of \$300.00 in U.S. money, an expensive undertaking in a rural district these days. I am sending him a little gift to encourage him but he'll have to raise the bulk of the cost himself, because the policy is for a congregation to pay its way as it goes along. What a joy it is to see how God over-ruled the POW experience to bring blessing to a community!

Speaking of building churches reminds me to mention the new Sung Nak church building in Pusan. You all know, of course, of the beautiful Yng Nak sanctuary in Seoul, Han Kyung Jik's church. Well, that congregation scattered at the time of the Red attack and a number who have banded together in Pusan are now erecting a steel and granite edifice. Incredible, the work of refugees who arrived penniless from Seoul two and a half years ago. Here in Non San a group of newly arrived Christians is likewise erecting a church of cement blocks, a large attractive building.

Now a few items from Seoul. It was good to see Marion Hartness back again, busy as formerly at Pierson Bible Institute. She has 25 students, a good start, and while I was there a man turned up whom they are permitting to study with the girls. Chosen Christian University whose main student body is in Pusan has opened a Seoul "branch" with 150 students. Ywha University also moved to Pusan, reopened in Seoul with 200 students. Dick Adams has arrived in Korea with the Army and had visited his home three times. The interment service for Douglas Avison's ashes was held in West Gate Church, April 29th. Henry Appenzeller presided at the service.

The Lyons, flying to the States via Europe, happened to be in London when Commissioner Lord, Salvation Army, who had just been released from a prison camp in North Korea, arrived via Siberia and Moscow. He has lost considerable weight and much of his large girth, the report goes, and acquired a white goatee. His enthusiasm hasn't dimmed for he was exulting in being able to bring intact from Seoul the funds of the Seoul Foreign School. How he did that under Red administration is a miracle for him to tell.

I hit it right in arriving in Seoul when I did for the next day was the annual field day of Fran Kinsler's Bible Clubs. Thousands of these children, too poor to attend regular school, gathered to put on a demonstration that was marvellous. The sight of a whole field of children, bowed in prayer, while different ones among them, 12, 13, 14 and 15 year old boys and girls led, was an inspiration. A little fellow presided over the meeting and a little girl led the singing of the whole congregation. Following the worship service was an athletic meet, organized right down to the last detail, even badges, and also bandages and mercuricrom for skinned knees. I shot two rolls of colored films to show America what God is doing in Seoul and throughout the country in training future church leaders for Korea.

Afterward Otto DeCamp took me to several homes for widows and their children. One group of such homes is in the former segregated quarter of Japanese days, former brothels. The Mission is in the process of buying the buildings, and here the women are supporting themselves by sewing with machines which the Mission purchased for them in Japan. In one place they are operating looms and I was presented with towels they had woven, which I hope I may be able to show you some day. I believe some of the most interesting pictures I got are of the children, whole rooms of them asleep in long rows on the floor, round-faced tots enjoying their afternoon nap while their mothers help to earn their living. Realizing all the time and effort involved in locating and acquiring the property, rehabilitating it, organizing the administration, providing the equipment, etc., brings an appreciation of what other members of the Mission have been doing. It was work I didn't know much about before.

Have I given you a summary of the General Assembly? All indications pointed to strife. Convictions are deep and feeling is running high. Apparently there were sharp utterances, but the Conservatives are overwhelmingly in the majority, and the vote was never in doubt. The issue is the Han Kuk (formerly "Chosen") Seminary, with professor Kim Je Jun the central personality. Last year the Assembly decided it would not ordain anyone from any Seminary other than the Presbyterian Seminary. This year they first disciplined Kim Je Jun and then voted to ordain men from other Seminaries, but not from any Seminary, or institution, that had faculty members under discipline. Last year the Assembly instructed Seoul Presbytery to take action on Kim, but he is so strongly entrenched there his friends did nothing, so this year the Assembly lowered the beam directly.

I have been down in Southern Presbyterian territory again, this time to Kwang Ju and Mokpo. Florence Root is back in Kwang Ju as busy as ever in the Girls Middle School. I stayed with the Petrie Mitchells whose two year old John, you remember, slipped in between army red-tape, and who is the only missionary youngster in Korea, a handsome and happy representative. In Mokpo I had lunch with Miss Green, Miss Hopper and R.K. Robinson. In Mokpo Roby took me over to visit the Catholic Mission, the Columbans from Ireland. Two huge new members had just arrived from the Emerald Isle and a newcomer from New Zealand. There they sat all dressed up in their canonicals studying the language. They kindly asked us to stay for lunch, but we excused ourselves, grateful nonetheless. Come on, Protestants, let us have more recruits!

Cordially,

Harold Voelkel.

P.S. We have now learned that our sailing date is June 24th and we shall be going to Seattle arriving about twelve days later. As it is an army transport, the name of the ship is withheld from us, but you may write us in care of the University Presbyterian Church, Dr. David Cowie (pastor), Seattle, Washington. We shall surely appreciate hearing from you and your prayers for us.